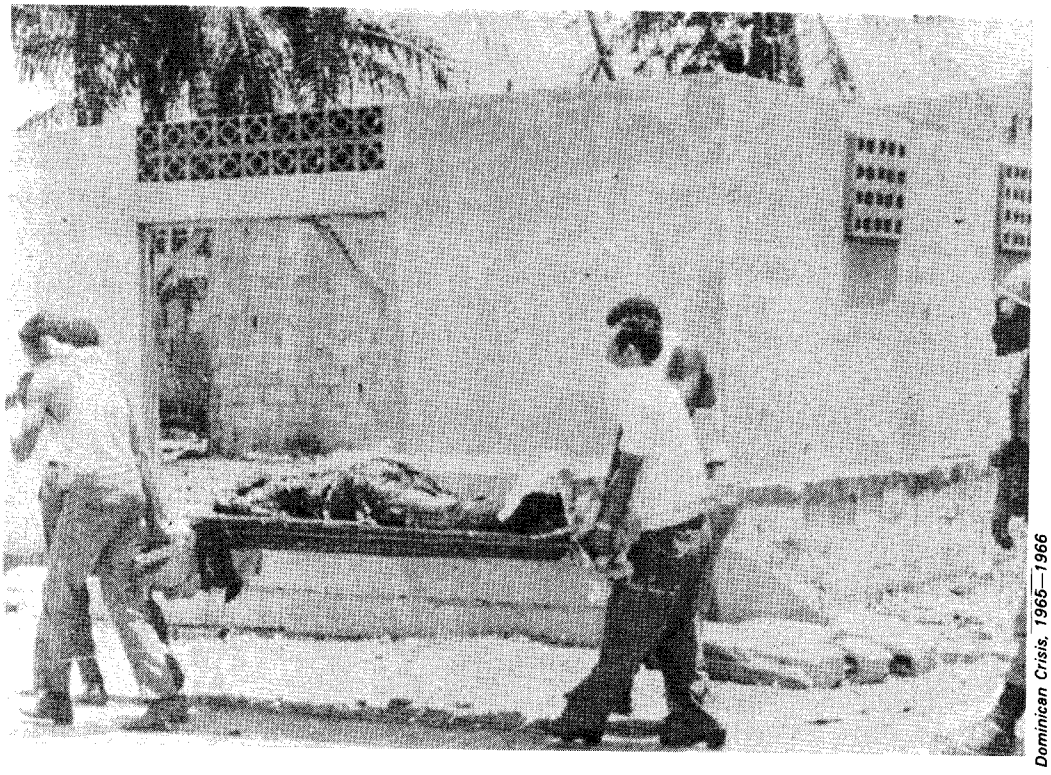
wish met with little success. The problem was that nothing seemed to work. Naval vessels offshore and the Army Security Agency both tried to jam RSD broadcasts, but neither had powerful enough equipment to interfere more than temporarily with the broadcasting range of a commercial station. On 8 and 10 May, Special Forces teams mounted successful air assault operations against RSD transmitter sites at Alto Bandero and La Vega, respectively, thereby reducing the effectiveness of RSD broadcasts in those and surrounding areas. The day after the Special Forces seized the La Vega transmitter, a team of paratroopers and Green Berets slipped into the north and severed telecommunication lines. The operation failed to shut down the radio station, but it did disrupt the telephone system used by the rebels for tactical purposes. By 13 May, Palmer had had enough and requested permission from Washington to mount an overt military operation against RSD. Before he received an answer, the GNR's F-51s attacked the station and knocked it off the air. The following day, Imbert's own special forces destroyed an alternate transmitter and studio north of the Duarte bridge. Finally, during *operación limpieza*, the GNR captured Radio Santo Domingo.[16] The Americans were delighted, at least until they discovered that Imbert had no intention of relinquishing the station to the OAS.

* * *



*Dominican Crisis, 1965—1966*

The removal of bodies, many of which had been left in the streets for days, was a top priority

In mid-May, U.S. Special Forces personnel in Santo Domingo received new orders. Described in an after-action report, the mission was ". . . to assist the 82d Airborne Division civic action program. This overt civic action mission was a cover for many covert Special Forces activities, and was designed to create an impression that Special Forces was primarily engaged in a civic action mission in the Dominican Republic."[17]

What constituted the "many covert" activities is not clear from the available evidence. Sources concerning the civic action program, on the other hand, are readily available, thanks to the efforts of civil affairs officers to preserve them.[18] A civic action-civil affairs program began as soon as marines and paratroopers established positions in and around Santo Domingo. Something had to be done to alleviate the deplorable conditions in the city and suburbs. Garbage and bodies littered the streets, electrical power outages were frequent, potable water was in short supply, and a starving and war-weary population required food and medical attention. Hospitals were crowded, with physicians practicing by candlelight. At first, the U.S. military's response to the shortages and human suffering consisted of little more than the voluntary sharing of C rations with hungry Dominicans or the providing of impromptu medical treatment. On 3 May, a bonafide civic action program supplanted voluntarism, as marines and the 82d distributed rice, powdered milk, cornmeal, beans, cooking oil, water, and clothing to the population. At the Embassy's request, Washington authorized the distribution of food to people on "both sides" in the civil war,[19] so long as they were unarmed. In all, over 15,000 tons of food and 15,000 pounds of clothing would exchange hands, not only in Santo Domingo but in the countryside as well.

At first, troops unfamiliar with civic action procedures exercised little effective control. As mobs of hungry Dominicans stormed distribution points, several members from a single family could each make off with a full family allotment. Some Dominicans, after having received their initial handout, simply hid it close by and returned for more. As soldiers distributing food and clothing gained experience, they enacted measures such as ration cards to curb such abuses. Free medical clinics also enjoyed a high volume of business, although the crowds requiring the doctors' attention were much better behaved. The medical supplies needed to run the clinics came from the United States, the first batch arriving on 1 May as the result of an Embassy request, with succeeding shipments beginning on 5 May.

While Marine and Army troops dispensed food and medicine, military engineers worked to restore power and water to Santo Domingo and to repair the city's incinerator so that garbage collection could resume. For the most part, the division's engineers lacked the equipment and the skills to repair and operate large facilities such as waterworks, incinerators, and power plants, but with the assistance of civilian and military experts, they managed to put the plants in operation. What the engineers resented, though, were orders that they personally take charge of ridding Santo Domingo's streets of garbage. "Clean up the streets, hell—we came here to fight!"

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U.S. soldiers distributing food to Dominicans in war-torn Santo Domingo

summarized their feelings, if somewhat inelegantly. The engineers followed orders, although as time passed, they delegated more and more of the actual collection work to the Dominicans, who, the soldiers argued, had much to relearn in the way of proper sanitation procedures.

There was also an unofficial side to the civic action program, seen primarily in the eagerness with which several U.S. units "adopted" orphanages in the Santo Domingo area. Out of their own pockets and occasionally (in completely unauthorized actions) from military stockpiles, soldiers provided the children with food, clothing, and supplies. They also played with them when time permitted and thrilled many with short helicopter rides. The soldiers' wives at Fort Bragg and elsewhere also contributed food and clothing to the orphans (as well as to other needy Dominicans). Moreover, before redeploying to the United States, units passed the hat and cleaned out their inventories to see that the orphanages would remain provisioned, at least for the near future.

The civic action program was but part of a larger civil affairs operation that focused on Santo Domingo but also included the countryside. The undertaking was massive and, in the opinion of an 82d company commander, "one of the most important missions during these early days." The indispensable military unit in the planning, administration, coordination, and implementation of this extensive civilian-military enterprise was the

42d Civil Affairs (CA) Company (augmented with personnel possessing civil affairs experience) out of Fort Gordon, Georgia. Elements of the 42d began arriving at San Isidro on 2 May; by the 6th, the company had begun normal operations under the command of XVIII Airborne Corps, but providing assistance to the 4th MEB, the 5th Logistics Command, and each of the 82d's three brigades. Initial operations aimed at performing humanitarian missions and restoring public utilities and services. To accomplish this, the company organized along the lines of functional teams.

Some of the teams accomplished their missions; others did not, often through no fault of their own. For example, although normal civilian legal processes had become a casualty of the Dominican civil war, the U.S. command did not assume the powers of local government, nor did it advise the 42d's Legal Team as to the status of U.S. forces in the Dominican Republic vis-à-vis international law, treaties, and other agreements. Consequently, the Legal Team had little to do but advise other functional teams on the legal ramifications of their activities. In another case, the Dominican minister of health, perhaps fearing the consequences of cooperating with the American military, refused to provide assistance to the Public Health Team in such critical areas as insect control and refuse disposal. The Public Education Team, in conjunction with AID and CARE representatives and local school officials, did help to reopen elementary schools for a short time until faculty shortages forced the schools to close once again. As for the high schools, there was no attempt to reopen them because of the Communist elements they supposedly harbored. The Economics Team met with bankers in an attempt to restore financial operations to the country, but after two weeks, U.S. Embassy and AID officials pushed the military out of these negotiations.

More successful were the efforts of the Public Facilities Team and the Public Welfare Team. The Public Facilities Team's assistance was instrumental in restoring garbage collection, electricity, and water to the city. The Public Welfare Team focused on many areas of the Dominican economy, but "by far the biggest responsibility of the team was that of food distribution to the people." With the goal of returning food control to the proper welfare agencies as soon as possible, the Public Welfare Team, working with AID officials and private agencies, initiated "a massive civil relief food distribution program." The first step involved AID procuring rice from local sources and having it transported to the Hotel Embajador, there to be hauled in military trucks to distribution points within the corridor. More food became available when the military situation permitted civilian transports to unload their cargo. On 5 May, relief supplies from the United States began arriving at Haina. The 82d dispatched trucks to the port to lessen the time between unloading and distribution.

While the operation at Haina was still under way, responsibility for food relief and economic aid programs was transferred to Assistant Secretary of State (designate) for Economic Affairs Anthony Solomon, who returned to the Dominican Republic in mid-May with a team of specialists. The food program suffered some disruption while Solomon assessed the situation, then

agreed to plans AID had made some ten days earlier. In the meantime, the Public Welfare Team continued to monitor the five battalion distribution points in Santo Domingo. (Civilian agencies also assumed responsibility for food and medical assistance in the villages and countryside, although civilian officials were often accompanied by 82d medical personnel.) In critiquing the program it had helped to establish, the Public Welfare Team recommended that in future food distribution operations, companies, not battalions, should run distribution points; only adult women should receive food; and normal welfare agencies should take over food distribution as soon as possible.

One general problem that plagued the civil affairs effort occurred in the realm of civilian-military cooperation and coordination. With many of their key facilities located in rebel territory, State and AID officials had allowed the 42d Civil Affairs Company to assume many of their respective functions. When the civilian officials found it possible to operate again, they often began to do so without informing the 42d, thus causing duplication of efforts. There was also a tendency on each side to be ignorant of the functions and capabilities of the other. Still, despite these and the other problems mentioned above, the civil affairs effort, on the whole, was highly successful.

The civic action and civil affairs programs sought to provide humanitarian aid, assist in stabilizing the country, and win the "hearts and minds" of the Dominican people. The last two goals coincided with efforts undertaken by Army psychological warfare specialists.[20] When U.S. troops entered the country, an urgent need arose to explain to the population the goals of American policy, the positive side of the intervention, and the need to restore order and democracy. Latin American specialists working for the United States Information Service (USIS) in Santo Domingo could have performed these tasks except that their printing and broadcast equipment were located in buildings controlled by the rebels. The 1st Psychological Warfare (PSYWAR) Battalion at Fort Bragg and the 1st PSYWAR Company (Field Army) had the necessary equipment to support USIS, but because the OPLAN called for the deployment of only a small, light mobile detachment, the company and the entire battalion did not reach the Dominican Republic until 7 May, and then largely at the insistence of Mr. Hewson Ryan, associate director of the United States Information Agency (USIA), who would direct all psychological operations in the Dominican Republic.

Ryan arrived at San Isidro from Washington on 2 May accompanied by one of the PSYWAR groups that entered the country piecemeal. When Ryan found out that one of his missions would be to deny the rebels the ability to broadcast their views freely—a mission "contrary to previous US policy and [his] own personal philosophy"—he voiced his objections, but "nevertheless carried on with vigor and skill."[21] He demonstrated that "vigor" by sending Carl Rowan, the director of USIA, a curtly worded request to help expedite the arrival of military printing equipment, the shortage of which, according to Ryan, was "seriously handicapping leaflet and poster output." Despite this handicap, USIS managed to have the military

launch its first pamphlet drop over Santo Domingo using two Air Force C-47s.[22]

When the 1st Psychological Warfare Battalion arrived in the Dominican Republic, it brought with it mobile printing presses, mobile broadcasting facilities, a loudspeaker capability to broadcast from trucks and from the two C-47s, and ultimately, heavy, mobile printing equipment. The loudspeaker trucks proved more effective than the aircraft in imparting information. Wherever the trucks would stop, hundreds of Dominicans would gather round to hear the latest news and receive leaflets and pamphlets, which by the end of May were being printed at a rate of 70,000 per day. On 5 May, the battalion's mobile broadcast, "The Voice of the Security Zone," hit the airwaves and was powerful enough to be picked up deep in the interior. In addition to these highly visible activities, battalion propaganda analysts helped interrogate rebel detainees to gain feedback on the PSYWAR effort and to uncover areas in which rebels and civilians alike were vulnerable to propaganda. Military specialists helped write scripts and other forms of propaganda, but USIS determined the themes of the material and retained tight control over all information disseminated by the battalion. Leaflets bearing pictures of Presidents Kennedy and LBJ and pamphlets extolling


PSYWAR team with speaker mounted on jeep

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the virtues of the OAS and the evils of communism became standard, if innocuous, fare. Some propaganda, however, was blatantly false, as USIS officials tried to convince the population that the intervention was a benevolent undertaking. One of the battalion's after-action reports listed among the USIS-imposed propaganda themes such fictions as the "landing was made only for peaceful and humanitarian ends," and the "US government supports neither side nor has it given military or material aid to either faction."

On the whole, civilian-military cooperation in the psychological warfare effort was "remarkably successful." It was not, however, entirely devoid of friction. Besides feeling constrained by USIS control, 1st PSYWAR Battalion


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Examples of PSYWAR material distributed to Dominicans during the intervention

personnel believed that civilian agencies had little understanding of the military's capabilities. Conversely, civilian participants often complained about delays in the delivery of Army equipment and then about the outdated material and the poor quality of products they received. At the time, General Palmer praised the PSYWAR effort but complained about "antiquated and unsuitable equipment." Upon reflection, however, he conceded that in psychological operations, Americans are "amateurs" because "we operate in an open society with a free press, and the thought of propaganda is kind of foreign . . . revolting to us," as opposed to the Communists who "can beautifully integrate the psychological aspects into all their operations." Referring specifically to PSYWAR operations in the Dominican Republic, Palmer maintained that the Americans were "good at it technically," but that "we didn't really know how . . . to communicate with people in that way, because we're just not used to the idea of using [propaganda] as a weapon."[23]

Just how effective were the civic action-civil affairs programs and the psychological operations in winning the hearts and minds of the Dominican population? The question is impossible to answer. Surveys by military personnel were conducted to learn the feelings of the Dominican people toward Americans, rebels, the OAS, etc., but the results were highly unreliable. For instance, persons conducting a survey on occasion would deliberately word questions in such a way as to obtain answers they thought would work to the military's advantage, while respondents would often tell an interviewer what they thought he wanted to hear.[24]

Undoubtedly, the food, clothing, and medical programs won friends among locals who had initially opposed the intervention. According to one 82d report, "Civil assistance has been the single most important factor in building a favorable image of the airborne soldier." Personal contact was indispensable to this goal, and fact sheets issued to the soldiers instructed them on proper conduct.[25] But despite this and other efforts to promote good relations, some friction between Dominicans and U.S. troops was inevitable. To begin with, the marines and the 82d were resented as an occupation army. The use of U.S. troops to break up demonstrations, despite the restraint exercised in doing so, also created hostility, as did "the immorality of some American soldiers who did not distinguish between professional prostitutes and ordinary Dominican girls." (The incidence of venereal disease in the Dominican Republic was high enough to make a lasting impression on several officers who tried various measures to curtail their troops' sexual liaisons with women other than the ubiquitous and "clean" camp followers.) In day-to-day dealings with Dominican citizens, a racial slur or an ugly incident could also undo a great deal of good will in seconds. In one particularly tragic occurrence, a soldier requesting an Alka Seltzer of a teenager who worked in a drug store thought that the boy had poisoned him. He shot and killed the teenager on the spot. A visit by General York to the neighborhood to offer his personal condolences could not assuage the bitterness caused by the tragedy.[26]

In a more positive vein, many Dominicans simply appreciated the fact that, with few exceptions, the intervention reduced the previously uncon-

trollable bloodletting of the civil war. While in a crowd, locals would often hurl abuse or more tangible objects at soldiers manning the front lines. Alone, a Dominican would often offer the Americans beer and whisper words of appreciation for the job they were doing. Perhaps indifference—or more aptly ambivalence—best describes the feelings of most Dominicans once Americans became a familiar presence among them. Few U.S. troops who served in the country fail to recall the words of a piece of graffiti that became more and more common as the intervention continued: *Fuera Yanqui—y lléveme contigo* (Yankee go home—and take me with you).[27]

* * *

"Discipline" is the word used most frequently, then and now, by soldiers describing the critical element in the performance of U.S. troops in the Dominican intervention. When manning a frontline position, discipline enabled a soldier to endure sniper fire every night without firing back at shadows or overreacting in an angry outburst causing unnecessary death and destruction. During riot-control operations, it took discipline to hold one's fire and stand firmly in the face of a hostile, often violent, mob. Discipline also enabled a soldier to cope with the tedium of day-to-day routine despite numerous recreational, educational, and training programs established to keep him occupied when not on duty.[28] But most of all, soldiers had to be disciplined to observe the numerous and increasingly complex rules of engagement imposed on them by higher authorities.

The initial rules of engagement made sense in both humanitarian and political terms. Prohibitions on the use of artillery (the 82d redeployed all but one battery by the end of May), tanks (the marines did not use theirs in action and the 82d left theirs at Bragg), and mortars prevented a conflagration in the congested tinderbox of Santo Domingo. Thus, few disputed the necessity of this restriction. The order not to fire unless fired on, while not so readily embraced, still fell within the realm of the necessary, especially during the early period of the intervention when an aggressive spirit, imperfect fire discipline, a belief in a military solution, and an instinctive fear of unknown dangers could have led to needless killing and, consequently, diplomatic complications. The policy of providing food, clothes, and medicine to all needy Dominicans regardless of political allegiance struck some soldiers as being unnecessarily magnanimous considering that a person picking up food in the afternoon might be shooting at you that night; yet from a humanitarian and public relations perspective, the policy was essential lest the United States be accused of partisan behavior and, worse, of allowing women and children to suffer needlessly.

Once the ISZ and LOC were established, the political concerns that dictated every phase of the intervention became even more pronounced. That meant a simultaneous rise in Washington's fears that some unforeseen incident would disrupt movement toward a political solution. Beginning on 3 May, to lessen the chance of such an incident, restrictions on the use of military power in the Dominican Republic became even more numerous and complex.[29] (Veterans of the intervention have chosen less charitable words

*Dominican Crisis, 1965—1966*

Celebrities entertained U.S. troops in the Dominican Republic. Here, Joey Heatherton dances as part of the Bob Hope Show.

to describe the rules of engagement: "dumb," "crazy," "mind-boggling," "demoralizing," "convoluted," and "confusing" are but a sample of the printable ones.)[30] That there would be no military solution to the crisis—as had been expected—was frustrating to Masterson, Palmer, York, and the other soldiers down through the ranks, even though the emphasis on diplomacy ultimately proved the wiser course for achieving long-term Dominican stability. Where frustration gave way to anger was in those cases in which civilian and military leaders in Washington appeared to ignore military considerations completely as they seemingly sacrificed the safety and morale of American soldiers in Santo Domingo on the altar of political considerations. The general rule not to fire unless fired on soon gave way to a succession of other rules, ending with a prohibition against firing unless one's position was in imminent danger of being overrun. Once the rebels realized this new situation, they took full advantage of it. A sniper with rifle in hand would often swagger down the middle of the street toward an American position, casually walk into a nearby building, choose his firing position, expend his ammunition, leave the building, and offer an obscene gesture as he departed the area. In response to this, U.S. troops could only hope to have time to take cover and escape the deadly ricochets—all the while wondering how the death of one sniper could undermine efforts to achieve a political settlement.

The procession of restrictions that emanated from higher authorities in May was not confined to general guidelines. Many pertained to specific tactical details. For example, riot control agents and CS (tear gas) grenades could not be used without permission of higher authorities, units west of the Ozama could not patrol, flamethrowers would not be used, and so on. When some Army units along the LOC set up a string of lights on their perimeter to deter sniper attacks at night, Constitutionalist protests to a United Nations team (viewed by all U.S. officials as prorebel) resulted in instructions from Washington to remove the lights. As Chief of Staff of the Army General Harold K. Johnson wrote a subordinate, "One thing that must be remembered . . . is that the command of squads has now been transferred to Washington and is not necessarily limited to the Pentagon either!"[31]

For commanders of combat units concerned with the safety and morale of their men, the rules of engagement created a dilemma. To obey the rules might further political objectives, but at the cost of American lives and of conceding certain advantages to the enemy. To disobey the rules would violate one of the most sacred tenets of command and risk court-martial. The enterprising commander thus looked for loopholes or ways to bend the rules without technically breaking them. One illustrative case involved an airborne company in the southwest portion of the LOC. The position overlooked the National Palace, which was located in the rebel zone but occupied by Loyalist troops. The company established liaison with the Loyalists, whom they regarded as friends if not allies. As the contacts increased, so, too, did the Americans' conviction that the Palace must not fall to the rebels. Since the building was surrounded on three sides by open areas, there existed little danger that a firefight would set that portion of the city ablaze. In view of

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The Presidential or National Palace

this, the company commander in question made preparations for an "artillery" barrage by stringing together several 3.5-mm rocket launchers and by mounting several M79s on wheels that adjusted fire when moved. When the Constitutionalists attacked the Palace, the airborne company waited for the inevitable round that would overshoot its mark and land in or near the American position. Having been "fired upon," the company launched its rockets and grenades in a devastating fusillade. A sympathetic battalion commander kept his subordinate out of trouble, but eventually a new rule of engagement plugged the loophole by forbidding any kind of firing in the vicinity of the National Palace.

Some of the rules of engagement were essential; others were inexcusably at odds with rational military practice. At times, officials in Washington, in their zeal to manipulate the military for political objectives, evinced little understanding of basic military requirements. Conversely, U.S. soldiers in the Dominican Republic, by their own admission, were not well versed in the nature of political-military operations. "Most of us were now beginning to experience a new phenomena [*sic*] of modern war—the political control of military operations," wrote one airborne soldier. "Here again was a condition for which we had not properly trained."[32] The training would come with the job, as after 3 June, a second round of political negotiations would dominate the crisis and the military's role in it.